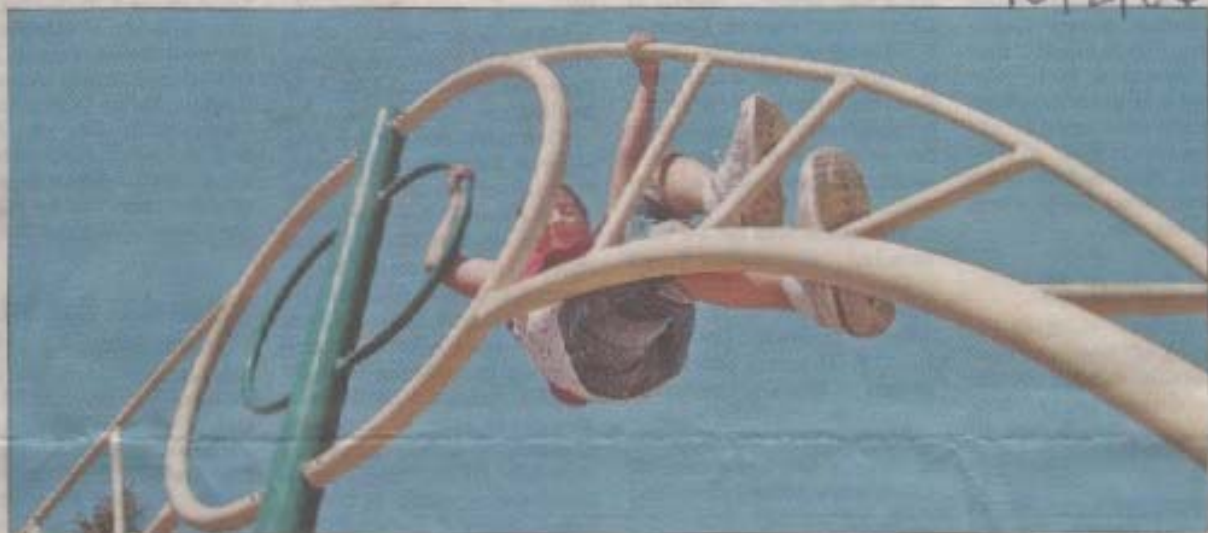


10/2/06



Monica Garcia, 9, climbs one of the new pieces of playground equipment on Monday at North Darby Park in Lafayette. The park was officially opened Sunday with a ribbon cutting ceremony.

By Frank Christ/Journal &amp; Courier

## Officials, neighbors celebrate renovation of North Darby Park

By JENNIFER CHRISTOS

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Vinton Neighborhood had a ribbon cutting ceremony Sunday afternoon for the renovated North Darby Park.

Located North of Underwood Street, the park is on Darby Lane, which intersects with Elk Street and Ulen Lane, in the heart of the Northern portion of Vinton Neighborhood.

According to Geneva Werner, co-chairwoman of the Vinton Neighborhood Association, North Darby Park was established at the same time the neighborhood was built, around the early 1950s.

Her children and grandchildren grew up in the neighborhood and played in the park.

"There were swings, a slide, and some old things that had to be removed before we could install the new equipment," said Werner.

Aimee Jacobsen, community development director, estimated about \$75,000 was spent to upgrade the park.

Ted Bumbleburg, parks and recreation superintendent, said in addition

*"We got a community development block grant and money from the city to help pay for the park."*

**Geneva Werner,  
Vinton Neighborhood Association**

to landscaping, replacing sidewalks and installing new fencing around the perimeter of the park, they added picnic tables, an adult swing, and various playground equipment including a tire swing and spiral slide.

They also installed a new basketball court and left an open grassy area that can be used for touch football or other sports.

"We got a community development block grant and money from

the city to help pay for the park," said Werner.

She said the corn refinery Tate & Lyle, formerly A. E. Staley Manufacturing, also contributed financially to the project.

"Even though they're across 52, they've still been good friends to our neighborhood," said Werner.

Werner said this is the second park these groups have helped Vinton Neighborhood renovate in recent years. The dedication for the newly renovated Arlington Park was last November.

Lafayette Mayor Tony Roswarski said he used to play whiffle ball at Darby Park. He was present at the ribbon cutting ceremony along with several other city officials.

He commended the collaborative effort among Vinton Neighborhood Association, Lafayette Parks and Recreation, and elected officials who helped bring about the renovation.

"There is a lot of history and a lot of tradition at this park," said Roswarski. "It's wonderful to see citizens and the city board working together to build community spirit."